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## LOTTERY RECOLLECTIONS.

WE are old enough to remember the State Lotteries in all their glory in the early part of the present century, when Bish, Webb, and other contractors advertised their Lucky Offices in every newspaper, and spread the walls with glaring red posting-bills all over the country. Like the Customs or Excise, the Lottery was a cherished national institution. Established under the authority of parliament, it was a means of augmenting the public revenue. The money realised by it usually amounted to from two hundred thousand to three hundred thousand pounds per annum, according to the sum offered by the contractors, who for the sake of a handsome profit undertook all the costly details and all the ignominy of the business. It was a pitiful way of raising funds by government; but it was of a piece with a number of other debasing practices that did not excite any particular horror, such as duelling, bull-baiting, matches for rat-killing by dogs, and prize-fighting. Our chief intimacy with the Lottery system was during the Regency of George, Prince of Wales, when fashionable morals were not of a very choice description, and much that was traditionary, however bad, passed without challenge. It is true things were beginning to mend, but it was very slowly.

The State Lotteries which had thus attained to grand dimensions as a financial resource were not an English invention. They were introduced from Italy in the reign of Queen Elizabeth as an expedient to raise funds for public works, such as bridges, harbours, and fortifications, for which at that period there were no regular means of construction. In the Italian cities, lottery-gambling had long been cultivated for financial reasons, and it was hoped that the practice would become equally available in England. There were, however, considerable difficulties at the outset. The thing did not commend itself to English commonsense. The first lottery attempted was in 1567—exactly the year when Scotland was thrown into a ferment by the murder of Darnley, and the

marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to Bothwell. Elizabeth's ministers tried hard to puff off the project. They described it as 'a very rich Lottery-general of money, plate, and certain sorts of merchandise.' The largest prize was to be five thousand pounds, of which three thousand pounds were to be paid in cash, seven hundred pounds in plate, and the remainder in 'good tapestry meet for hangings and other covertures, and certain sorts of good linen cloth.' A prize of five thousand pounds was an immense temptation for a man to try his luck, for it was equal at least to thirty thousand pounds in the present day, yet it does not seem to have stimulated avarice to the extent that had been expected. The chances were desperately against getting the big prize. The tickets, or 'lots,' as they were called, were four hundred thousand in number, at ten shillings each; but many of them were divided into halves or quarters, or lesser subdivisions for convenience of the poorer classes. To encourage people to take tickets, the prizes were exhibited at the house of the Queen's goldsmith, in Cheapside; and a wood-cut was appended to Her Majesty's proclamation on the subject, shewing a tempting display of gold and silver plate.

It is interesting to note the exceeding reluctance to buy tickets, notwithstanding all the efforts made by the ministers of the crown, backed by absolutely scolding proclamations from Her Majesty. The Lord Mayor of London and the justices of several counties were reprimanded for not exerting themselves sufficiently to encourage the Lottery-general, and it was insisted that the principal man in each parish should induce 'the people as much as possible to lay in their monies into lots.' This characteristic method of royal dragooning to encourage gambling in opposition to general desire, is a very striking commencement for a history of the lottery system. The drawing of the tickets for this magnificent affair began on the 11th January 1568-9, in a temporary building erected at the west end of old St Paul's Cathedral, and continued until the following May. So much for the first State Lottery. Its intro-

duction to public favour was evidently against the grain; a circumstance reflecting much credit on the English mental calibre, which had been strengthened by the Reformation a generation earlier, and was not as yet perverted by the mad pranks of the Stuarts.

In 1612, nine years after the accession of James I., a fresh attempt was made to get up a State Lottery. Its professed object was to favour the plantation of colonies in Virginia. The drawing took place as formerly at the west end of St Paul's. It could not have been very alluring, for the highest prize was only 'four thousand crowns in fair plate.' Charles I. projected a lottery to defray the expenses of conveying water to London; and during the Commonwealth there was a lottery for lands in Ireland. These were comparatively modest undertakings. The mania for lotteries did not break out till after the Restoration, when they were started to assist the loyalists who had suffered in the Civil War. At the same time every kind of gambling was so freely carried on that much money was lost and won. A story is told of a Colonel Thomas Panton, who in one night won ten thousand pounds, which he had the good sense to invest in the lands that now form the site of Panton Street, Haymarket. Satisfied with his gains, he never handled cards or dice afterwards. This was a rare case of self-command. In the frenzy of the period, the whole nation seems to have been inoculated with the spirit of gambling; for all sorts of lotteries large and small sprung into existence. 'The Royal Oak Lottery' was that which came forth with the greatest éclat, and was continued till the end of the century. One of the most audacious schemes was a lottery for which the price to be paid for a ticket was only a single penny, and the only prize was a thousand pounds. The hope of getting a thousand pounds for a penny drove the humbler classes frantic, and they rushed in crowds with their small means to the shops of dealers in tickets.

Gambling, like every other vice, needs only a beginning. The frenzied desire to risk money in lotteries resulted in the South Sea bubble and similarly mad speculations in the early part of the eighteenth century. The older essayists and novelists relate a number of amusing incidents illustrative of the rage for buying lottery tickets. Henry Fielding ridiculed the public madness in a farce produced at Drury Lane Theatre in 1731, the scene being laid in a lottery office, and the action of the drama descriptive of the wiles of office-keepers and the credulity of their victims. A whimsical pamphlet was also published about the same time, purporting to be a prospectus of a 'lottery for ladies;' by which they were to obtain as chief prize, a husband and coach-and-six for five pounds; such being the price of each share. Husbands of inferior grade in purse and person, were put forth as second, third, and fourth rate prizes; and a lottery for wives was soon advertised on a similar plan. This was legitimate satire, as so large a variety of lotteries were started, and in spite of reason or ridicule, continued to be patronised by a credulous public. Sometimes the lotteries were turned to purposes of public utility. Almost every year from the reign of Queen Anne, a lottery was sanctioned by parliament for some public purpose. For example, in

1736, an Act was passed for building a bridge at Westminster, for at that time London Bridge was the only communication by roadway across the Thames within the bounds of the metropolis. The lottery consisted of one hundred and twenty-five thousand tickets at five pounds each. This lottery was so far successful, that parliament sanctioned others in succession till Westminster Bridge was completed.

Such were the beginnings of the State Lotteries. At first, they were set up for useful public purposes, at a time when rates were hardly thought of. In 1780, they had become mere engines of voluntary taxation to help out the annual supplies. The matter was confided to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who on each occasion invited five or six members of the Stock Exchange to meet him, and whom he may be supposed to have addressed as follows: 'Gentlemen, I propose a new lottery for your consideration. It is to consist of twenty thousand tickets, for which I engage to pay ten pounds each, on an average, in prizes, or two hundred thousand pounds altogether. What do you bid per ticket?' In the competition that ensued, the price realised was usually about fifteen pounds per ticket; the purchaser, or it might be two purchasers united, taking the whole lot. The price at which these contractors disposed of the tickets was from about twenty-one to twenty-five pounds, according as they were sold whole or in divisions. The price of a sixteenth was generally one pound eleven shillings and sixpence. The result financially was that, on paying the prizes, to the aggregate amount of two hundred thousand pounds, government had a hundred thousand pounds over. The contractors had considerably more, but they paid nearly the whole expenses, and incurred all the risks of the undertaking. Two lotteries of this kind per annum would thus recruit the Treasury with the sum of two hundred thousand pounds.

Few bought whole tickets, halves, quarters, or eighths. From all we saw or heard, fully seventy-five per cent. of the twenty thousand tickets were divided and sold as sixteenths, which prodigiously augmented the number of those taking risks. The lottery might be compared to a huge gaming-table surrounded by three hundred thousand players laying down stakes from a guinea and a half to twenty guineas—or in plain terms, were by mutual agreement trying to pick each other's pockets. Sometimes the lottery consisted of thirty thousand tickets, with a corresponding advantage to the revenue, and an increase to half a million in the number of persons concerned as purchasers.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had nothing to do with the 'scheme' on which the lottery was devised. That was managed by the contractors. The construction of a scheme that would secure general approbation was a matter of more delicacy than the dressing up of a draper's window with a captivating array of goods at temptingly low prices. The public always waited impatiently to get a copy of the scheme, which was in the form of a small hand-bill. All the lottery agents in the kingdom were besieged for early copies. Ordinarily, the highest prizes were for twenty thousand pounds, with lesser prizes down to ten, or even five pounds. The blanks were overwhelming in number; but any mention of them was kept out

of the scheme. To the best of our recollection, no doubt was ever cast on the honesty of the proceedings. Discreditable as being a source of national demoralisation, the lottery was conducted with rigorous accuracy. The tickets, of whatever denomination, duly registered, consisted of slips resembling bank cheques, printed partly in red ink, signed on behalf of a contractor, with the number written in bold black figures. On the appointed day, the drawings took place publicly at Cooper's Hall, Basinghall Street, under official superintendence, with clerks to note down the fate of each number as it was drawn. There were two circular boxes turned with handles, and called wheels. Into one wheel, billets notifying the numbers were put; and in the other were the prizes and blanks. The drawers were two Blue-coat boys. When the first boy drew a number, the boy at the other wheel drew a prize or blank, as it happened, and that determined its fate. The record of the drawings was printed and circulated for general information.

The printed statement was everywhere waited for with intense anxiety. The weal or woe of families, the hopes of thousands, depended on it. How eagerly the holders of tickets looked down the columns of figures to discover whether they had lost or won! In London, the statement was soon ready for perusal; but in the provinces, owing to the tedious means of communication, days were spent in the agony of anticipation. An hour or two by telegraph would now make known a man's good or bad fortune; but in those days there were no telegraphs. As an apprentice to a bookseller in Edinburgh, who acted as lottery agent to Webb, the present writer had occasion to see a good deal behind the scenes—to note the exultation of prize-holders, and the dull despair of those among the struggling classes who had imperilled their all on a sixteenth, and lost. Our employer was a precise person of saturnine disposition, without any saliency in ordinary business. In the lottery department that paid pretty well, and in which he was expected to shew spirit, he displayed unwonted animation, and with a faint smile sometimes ventured on a degree of persuasive jocularly. When a plain countryman called to see the scheme, as having some irresolute thoughts of a sixteenth, he would enter into conversation in this wise. 'The scheme seems very tempting, two twenty thousand pound prizes; but the chances are terribly against winning; it is like throwing away money for nothing. What is your opinion? With a graceful inclination of the head: 'I cannot advise you, sir, one way or other. But look at these sixteenths I hold in my hand. For anything I know, one of them may be the sixteenth of a twenty thousand pound prize, which would realise twelve hundred and fifty pounds to the lucky holder; and that sum I should instantly lay down in cash. You see, therefore, although there is no absolute certainty of winning, you put yourself in the way of fortune.' This safe line of argument was invariably successful. A sixteenth was selected and paid for. It was a strictly ready-money business. No credit on any account.

In these experiences, a queer, whimsical set of people came under notice. Some would only buy odd numbers, such as 17,359; some eagerly sought for numbers which they had dreamt of as being

prizes; some brought children to select a ticket from the number offered—a degree of weakness which was paralleled by those who superstitiously brought the seventh son of a seventh son to make the selection for them; some more whimsical still, would purchase only at the last moment what everybody had rejected. Occasionally there was a lottery which embraced two drawings with an interval of several weeks between them, in which case there was a furious advertising to the effect that there were 'twenty thousand pounds still in the wheel.' In instances of this kind, many who got a prize of small amount by the first drawing, paid the difference, and purchased a sixteenth for the second drawing; the final result being generally a double loss. The greater number of persons who threw away their money belonged to the middle and sub-middle classes, including tradesmen who were in struggling circumstances, butchers in the market, waiters in hotels, gentlemen's servants, hackney-coachmen, lodging-house keepers, and shopmen. It was sorrowful to observe how many individuals with little to spare scraped together money to risk in this species of gambling. Two or three instances occurred within our knowledge of persons getting sixteenths of the twenty thousand pound prizes, but with no good result to themselves or families.

To keep up the excitement, one lottery followed fast on the heels of another. Nothing was left undone in the shape of puffing to recommend 'lucky offices' to attention. When a dealer happened to sell a ticket which turned up a large prize, he indulged in the most unmeasured exultation. His was the true 'lucky office,' where prizes might be confidently reckoned on. Contractors vied with each other in the grandeur of their placards, and the seductive ingenuity of their advertisements. The New Year, Twelfth Night, and Valentine's Day were seized on as appropriate opportunities for insinuating puffs suitable to the season. Bish, who aspired to be the prince of lottery contractors, had some amusing devices for keeping people in mind as to the importance of buying tickets. At the New Year, he issued gratuitously small Diaries, in one of the pages of which you saw in print: 'Paid for my share,' and in another page farther on: 'Received as amount of my share.' At Twelfth Night, he dispersed packets of cards with droll wood-engravings representing characters, and scraps of doggerel verse. One of these cards shewed the figure of Moll Flaggon, dressed in a man's hat and soldier's coat, as seen in Burgoyne's opera of the 'Lord of the Manor,' dancing like a madcap, and singing (if memory serves us) the following lines:

'Come on, my soul;  
Post your col,\*  
For I must beg or borrow;  
Come my dear,  
Never fear  
Future care or sorrow;  
The Lottery try,  
A prize you'll buy,  
Then neither beg nor borrow.'

That such ribaldry should have been profusely circulated in order to dispose of tickets, is enough

\* Post the column of your household expenses, to see if you can give or lend me money.—Ed.

to shew the unwholesomeness of feeling incidental to the lottery system. Whatever was the mischief socially and morally produced by the State Lottery, it was immensely aggravated by the spirit of gambling which it evoked. As comparatively few persons could buy a sixteenth, there sprung up a trade among a mean order of brokers of insuring numbers. This was in effect betting. In return for, say, a shilling, the sum of one pound would be promised if a specified number turned up a prize. At one time when the mania was at its height, the insurance-office keepers employed men to canvass for customers all over London, chiefly among domestic servants. From carrying a red morocco pocket-book in their hand wherein to inscribe the names of insurers, they became known as 'morocco-men.' It has been stated on credible authority that in 1800, on an average each servant in the metropolis spent annually as much as twenty-five shillings in this vile practice of lottery insurance; the sum-total so expended for a year by the wage-earning classes generally being estimated at half a million sterling. The disorders—suicides, robberies, pilferings, brawls, fighting, and cheating—caused by these 'Little Goes,' as the insurance practices were familiarly termed, were so clamant, that in 1802, an Act of parliament, 42 George III. cap. 119, was passed for their suppression. The preamble of the Act refers to the great sums of money 'fraudulently obtained from servants, children, and unwary persons, to the great impoverishment and utter ruin of many families.' The penalty for carrying on Little Goes, or any other lottery whatsoever not authorised by parliament, was a fine of five hundred pounds; the offender to be treated as a rogue and vagabond.

Subsequently to 1802, Little Goes maintained only a clandestine existence, like the betting-houses in connection with horse-races in the present day. At length, the State Lottery, the parent of these depravities, wore itself out of date. By the more thoughtful part of the community, it could no longer be tolerated. Government became ashamed of it, and saw that other means must be adopted to help the revenue. Proposals to put it down encountered opposition in various quarters. The country, it was said, would go to ruin if the State lotteries were abolished.

The State Lottery required no formal abolition. It would die of itself, if not kept alive by fresh acts of the legislature. The plan adopted was this. In 1823, an Act of parliament was passed authorising a lottery to consist of sixty thousand tickets, which might be divided into three lotteries. This was the Act 4 George IV. cap. 60, a most elaborate statute, extending over twenty-two quarto pages of print. Three years elapsed before the last of the three lotteries vanished. When the day arrived for the final drawing, a sense of sorrow pervaded the habitual purchasers of tickets. Amidst the howls of contractors and agents, and the disconsolate lamentations of the whole tribe of bill-stickers and lottery-board carriers, the last State Lottery was drawn on the 18th October 1826. Instead of evil ensuing, the relinquishment of this stupendous system of gaming was in all respects salutary. There disappeared not only a bad example, but a constant temptation to mis-expenditure of means.

The spirit of gambling did not immediately depart. Raffles became common. If a man wanted money, he raffled his watch. At watering-places, such as Margate, visitors were attracted to shops where they raffled for money to be laid out in jewellery or other articles. At every fair and race there was a roulette-table, even though contrary to law. The people of Glasgow went beyond these small enterprises. To provide for the liquidation of claims in connection with certain street improvements, extending from the Green to the Trongate, they got up three lotteries in succession. The last of them was stopped as illegal, and was only suffered to proceed under the authority of an Act of parliament, passed 28th July 1834, on condition that it should be the last permitted to be drawn. In 1836, a public Act was passed against all illegal lotteries, and the advertising of foreign lotteries in British newspapers. The frequent repetition of Acts of this kind curiously illustrates the extreme difficulty experienced in quelling the spirit of gambling. In spite of every denunciation, lotteries in the form of raffles continued to flourish, either through the apathy of local authorities or their reluctance to interfere. In recent times there has scarcely been a new church or chapel built for which funds were not eked out by a bazaar, fortified by a raffle—the clergymen immediately concerned offering no objections to the drawing by lot, and usually rivalling the young ladies in actively canvassing for the sale of tickets.

One would not like to speak severely of these bazaar raffles; yielding some little amusement, they were not promoted for private gain. The purchasing of tickets was only another way of giving a charitable contribution. Unfortunately, the presumption is that they fell under the essential characteristic of a lottery, which the statute defines as the distribution of prizes, whether of goods or money, by chance. Certainly, in a moral point of view, they were no worse than the Art Unions which were established, under peculiar safeguards, for the promotion of the fine arts, by an Act of parliament in 1846. In judging of questions of this kind, the mere notion that there can be nothing wrong in gambling if any good object is effected, will scarcely answer; otherwise M. Blanc, the keeper of the *rouge-et-noir* tables at Monaco, who is said to have inherited two millions sterling from his worthy father, might plead that out of his gains he is at the entire cost of an excellent public reading-room, an admired band of music, and beautiful walks and gardens overlooking the Mediterranean, open to everybody.

We are here brought back to that terrible catastrophe, the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, by which hundreds of unfortunate shareholders were plunged into ruin, and hundreds of depositors were meanwhile deprived of the money they had confided to that fraudulent concern. With the benevolent view of meliorating the disaster, certain individuals, chiefly connected with Glasgow, conceived the idea of a lottery to raise the sum of six millions, of which three millions were to be appropriated as prizes, minus expenses, and the other three devoted to the special object in view. A wilder financial enterprise has not been proposed in modern times. Lotteries are illegal; this one could not have



been brought into practical operation without an Act of parliament, and that no one could reasonably expect. There were other difficulties. Where was the vast organisation of contractors and agents to carry out the intricate details? Where were the purchasers to be found for six millions' worth of tickets? Above all, where was the trusted official guarantee for the payment of three millions of prizes? The success of the State Lottery depended primarily on the fact that the government was responsible for the payment of the stipulated amount in prizes; and that every prize was equivalent to a draft on the Treasury, which would be cashed by any banker. Among the projectors of the Glasgow lottery there appears to have been a reliance on foreign agency; but advertisement of any foreign lottery in Great Britain is forbidden by statute. Altogether, the enterprise was very like an attempt at fighting impossibilities.

As the projected lottery was stopped by a communication from the crown authorities on the ground of illegality, the present reference to it may seem like slaying the slain. The thing, however, ought not to pass into oblivion without remark. Independently of the practical objections enumerated, there were its demoralising tendencies, which seem to have escaped the foresight of its projectors, and are apparently not kept in view by persons who entertain a lingering approval of the undertaking. Considered in the light of experience, the lottery would to an alarming degree have revived the gambling mania which the legislature endeavoured to stamp out half a century ago. The elements of that mania still exist in the hosts of betting-men at race-courses, who if an opportunity offered, would gladly restore the worst features of the old lottery system, and produce a state of things which all the preaching power in the country would probably fail to counteract. And to think of this having emanated from Glasgow! Surely that city, so remarkable for its commercial development, has suffered sufficiently by its bank frauds to be discredited as the author of another lottery, which in its dimensions was to transcend all previous experience. The very proposition subjected the moral and religious character of Scotland to a storm of obloquy and ridicule. The English press was shocked at an attempt so contrary to the boasted intelligence of the age, so unlike what might be expected from sober-minded Scotchmen. It is to be hoped that no one blinded by an eager philanthropy will do anything to renew an effort so deplorable in its prospective results.

We would willingly here stop, but are reminded that the closing of the raffle system invites some attention. Here again, Glasgow strangely figures in the annals of financial ingenuity. In that city there latterly grew up among shopkeepers a practice of selling goods by raffles, pleasantly described as 'Enterprise Sales.' Crowds of people were collected, small sums were paid, and the drawings were by lot or chance. These sales were in reality lotteries, and contrary to law; but the local magistracy having some difficulty in dealing with them, the matter was taken up by the Lord Advocate on behalf of the crown. The case of three individuals concerned came before the Court of Session early in February, and was decided by Lord Curriehill. The judg-

ment was conclusive against the defendants, who were each fined in the prescribed penalty of fifty pounds; but in consideration of their ignorance of the statute, and the length of time they had been tolerated, his Lordship suggested that the Treasury might possibly mitigate the fine. Following on the decision, a number of 'Enterprise Sales' imitative of those in Glasgow, immediately collapsed. Here, then, these petty lotteries or raffles, whether carried on by tradesmen in the way of business, or to meet casual necessities, have, like the great lotteries of a past era, been at length judiciously discouraged. All that remains, as far as we can see, is to check in a manner equally peremptory the clandestine sale of tickets for Hamburg, Austrian, French, or other foreign lotteries, occasionally a plague to the community. W. C.

## YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

## CHAPTER XV.—TO THE RESCUE.

'TERRIBLE night, neighbour!'

'Terrible night it be!'

The speakers were a white-coated shepherd, whose dogs and he had enough to do to hurry the belated flock along the moorland road; and a carter trudging homewards beside his fore-horse, whose tangled mane tossed wildly in the gale. Then both men stood still for a moment, not to converse, but, as it seemed, to let their eyes by a common impulse turn to the leaden-coloured expanse of sea, streaked with angry whiteness, that was yet dimly discernible beneath the driving rack of storm-clouds; and as they did so, the shepherd said, as earnestly as ever he had spoken when joining in the responses in church: 'The Lord be merciful to all poor creatures at sea!'

Shepherd and carter were right. A terrible night it was, the wind rising, the rain and hail rushing down in arrowy showers, and then ceasing, as if the might of the gale were too much even for them, and the far-off roll of thunder audible amidst the nearer, hoarser roar of the great sea, now fully aroused, and clamorous as some monster eager for its prey. The wild white birds that glean their living from the sea had scented danger hours ago, and flown, screaming, far inland for shelter. The storm-drum was hoisted at every station where the Admiralty had control; and the telegraphic wire had long since begun to flash warnings to harbour-master and dock superintendent throughout the coast-line, that mischief was to be looked for, and vessels were best in safe anchorage and land-locked places on such a night as threatened to pass over our shores.

But if the gathering night, and the blackening sky, and the howl of the gale, seemed dreadful enough to those dwellers on dry land who ran no risk save of an unroofed cow-shed or cottage-thatch blown away, doubly formidable did they appear to those who, living in Treport, heard the spray rattle against their windows, and shuddered even at their firesides as they listened to the shriek of the wind as it gained strength. What waves were those that beat upon the beach, seeming to shake the very earth with the weight and fury of their assault! Even in the sheltered quay-pool the water was rough, boats bobbing up and down cork-like, and larger craft straining at chain and hawser, like high-mettled horses fretting

against the curb. It was one of those rare nights on which, in exposed towns on the sea-coast, there is but scanty sleep for any one, so vivid and so immediate is the sympathy between those safe ashore and those in sore peril at sea.

'Where's the Captain of the steamer? Oh, here he is!' said the officer in charge of the coast-guard station, elbowing his way through the throng of loungers at the street end. 'Well, Captain Ashton, there's work for you and your tug; that is, if you can venture to tow out the life-boat in such weather, and if the men will man her. There's a big, full-rigged vessel, homeward-bound, in distress near the Head. The officer at the coastguard station there has sent the news by a mounted messenger. Something wrong on board of her; for they've only fired one gun, and twice burned a Bengal-light, and yet she seems quite unmanageable. They expect her to strike on the Spur Reef.'

Hugh Ashton was ready enough, and so was the steamer. The *Western Maid* had been lying all day, with fires burning and crew on board, in expectation of some such summons as this; and now it had come. There was a stir on the quay, and in especial a bustle about the boat-house where the life-boat was kept. She was dragged out and launched; there were plenty of muscular arms ready to help in that; and the men who were to row her mustered, in their cork jackets, to answer to their names, as willingly as ever they had gathered for pilchard-fishing. They were not to go on board her, though, until it was certain that their thus risking valuable lives would be of use, so they too passed over the steamer's gangway.

There was some weeping and some shrill remonstrance among women who had mingled with the crowd. We cannot all be heroes, and especially heroines, and perhaps the most painful part is that assigned to those who stay at home, in an agony of suspense, while the dear ones are away doing battle against storm or enemy. It certainly was as naughty a night to swim in as ever English shores have known, from the time when Shakespeare wrote till now; and the very thunder of the surf, as the Atlantic tide rose in angry majesty, had in its diapason something of menace. The spray broke high, in glistening columns or heavy sheets, over the pier-head.

'Ready, now? No hurry, lads! Stand by, to cast off moorings,' called out Hugh Ashton from his deck.

'Fair-weather Captain, is he, now?' whispered Big Ned the Devonshire man, in the ear of Salem Jackson, as he pointed to where Hugh stood, with bright watchful eyes and calm resolute face.

Salem Jackson, who looked paler than usual, and seemed but ill at ease, in spite of the glass of rum so lately swallowed at the *Mariner's Joy*, responded by an inarticulate snarl. Just before the moorings were cast off, 'Nezer the dwarf, followed by Neptune, came bustling over the gangway.

'Take the dog!' exclaimed the dwarf eagerly; 'take him, Cap! You don't know—how should ye—what Nep's worth in a sea. I'd go with ye, but that I'm not straight-backed. But Nep's as good as a gold guinea.'

And Hugh, smiling good-naturedly, allowed the four-footed volunteer, who had taken an unusual

fancy to himself personally, to accompany the expedition.

'Now for it!' There was a rush to the pier-head, in spite of the spray, to see the steamer fight her way over the bar, where the waves leaped and roared like lions. It was no child's play that struggle with the surf; but there were two pair of stout hands at the wheel, and the engines worked their best, so that although for a moment the *Western Maid*, reeling and deluged fore and aft, was all but hidden by wave-crests and broken water, she burst the barrier, and fought her way, slowly and sturdily, out to sea. A hearty hurrah from the lookers-on greeted this first victory in the elemental strife; and it was felt that, come what might, Hugh Ashton had fairly won his spurs and earned his reputation as a bold and skilful seaman. Whether he could bring efficient aid to those in distress, was quite another affair.

This was no holiday voyage. The quick jerking motion of the engines, and the quivering of the timbers under repeated buffets from the heavy sea, told that the gallant little tug was doing all that wood and iron and steam could do in that life-and-death encounter with Nature in her wrath. Drenched with the driving spray and pelting rain, the men bent over the bulwarks and shaded their eyes to see the farther through the scud and the dark night; while by Hugh's skill and forethought alone was the life-boat astern kept from being dashed to splinters against the steamer's counter. A third sailor was soon wanted at the helm, so great was the force of wind and sea. Before the *Western Maid* had well gained an offing, there arose a murmur among some of the crew, of which Long Michael the mate shrewdly suspected Salem Jackson to be the originator, of: 'Put back! put back! It can't be done!'

'Who is it that says it can't be done?' called out Hugh, in clear ringing tones of command. 'I say it can, and it shall! Silence there—and steady, lads! Helm hard aport, and set the storm-jib forward, will you! She rides easier now.'

There was no more talk of putting back. Indeed, to retreat was almost as dangerous as to advance; and the steamer, once clear of the tremendous surf that beat upon the coast, as if maddened by opposition to its might, really did bound more lightly over the huge black waves that rose in endless succession as though to overwhelm her.

'There she be, Cap. Heaven have mercy on those on board her!' exclaimed Michael the mate, as holding by shroud and bulwark, for to keep one's footing on that soaked and heeling deck was, even for a sailor, difficult, he crept up to Hugh's side. 'Go to pieces she must, in ten minutes' time or so.' And indeed it appeared as if the honest Cornishman's prediction would soon be realised. There was the doomed ship, with broken masts and disordered rigging, careening over beneath the force of the merciless billows that broke in thunder over her huge hull. She fired no guns, and made none of the signals usual to a vessel in such dire distress, but floundered helplessly on, like a wounded whale in some shallow of the Greenland coast, to where destruction awaited her.

Full ahead, the foam and froth and hissing jets of spray betraying its presence, was the Spur Reef. The low rocks, black and cruel, like the

jagged teeth of some half-sunken monster of the deep, could just be made out through the gloom of the wild night. The ship's torn sails were flapping like the wings of a hurt sea-bird, and she rolled and staggered as she ploughed her fated way towards the rocks. Then, with a crash, she struck upon the reef, and instantly the waters leaped over her, so that she was hidden for the time in foam and scud; but when again a glimpse of her was obtained, a blue-light was observed to be burning on board her.

'Not many on her deck!' said half-a-dozen voices at once on board the *Western Maid*. But there was not much time for talking, since the life-boat must be used now or never; and to get her manned and started without fatal accident in such a sea, and with the steamer pitching and rolling as she did, like a maddened thing, required the nicest seamanship and the best exertions of all who shared in the work. There was no flinching though, and one by one the trained oarsmen dropped into their places. 'Together, and with a will!' shouted the cockswain, grasping the tiller-ropes; and off went the life-boat on her short but difficult trip. It was a fearful sight to see that boat tossing on the feathery crest of a giant wave, like a withered leaf driven by the wintry wind, and then to watch her sink, as into a black ravine, into the deep trough of the raving raging sea. Again and again she faced the surges, and again and again, beaten and baffled, she was swung round and driven back. Then two of the oars snapped suddenly; the life-boat broached to, capsized, flinging the rowers out into the angry water, and floated helpless.

There was a loud outcry among those on board the tug, echoed from the wrecked ship; but luckily the steamer was near, the life-boat men had their cork jackets to keep them afloat, and there were lines enough in readiness on board the *Western Maid*, so that, thanks to noosed ropes and deft hands, the crew of the boat were rapidly dragged on board, and the buoyant little craft itself secured.

'Those poor souls yonder,' said the old cockswain of the life-boat, as he pointed to the despairing group visible above the black bulwarks of the stranded ship, 'we're helpless to help them, Cap'en. You may!'

'Steam can do it,' was Hugh's cheerful response. 'Go on ahead there!' And, fighting through the wrath of the tempest, the *Western Maid* approached the wreck.

#### CANINE ANECDOTES.

THE following is a touching incident in the life of a collie dog. Some time ago, the late Mr H— possessed a collie shepherd dog, which was very clever at its duty until it had a litter, one of which was spared to it. After this all the poor animal's affections seemed to be centred in her puppy, for she refused, or did most unwillingly, the work she had to do, which so vexed her master that he cruelly drowned the puppy before the mother's eyes, covering the bucket in which he left the body with a sack. He then went round the fields followed by the old dog, who from that moment resumed her former usefulness. On Mr H—'s return, after having had

his tea in the evening, he bethought himself of the bucket, and went to fetch it to empty the contents into a hole he had made in the manure heap; he found the bucket, covered as he had left it, but on pouring out the contents there was nothing but water. He questioned his wife and her niece, but neither knew anything about it.

The next morning Mrs H— was struck with the piteous expression of the poor animal's face, and she said to her: 'Scottie, tell me where you have taken your puppy?' The dog immediately ran off a distance of quite a hundred yards to the kitchen-garden, jumped the fence and went direct to the farther end of the garden, to a spot situated between two rows of beans; there, where the earth had been apparently recently moved, she sat and as it were wept. Mrs H— went again into the house, and without mentioning what had occurred, said to her niece: 'Ask Scottie what she has done with her puppy.' The question was put, and again the poor creature went through the same performance. These circumstances were mentioned to Mr H—, who pooh-poohed the idea of there being anything out of the common; but to satisfy his wife, went to the spot, and dug down a distance of three feet, and there sure enough had the faithful, fond mother carried and buried her little one.

Here is another interesting narrative of a collie:

'It is many years ago since I made the acquaintance of Wanderer, a very fine collie, and the subject of the present sketch. He lived at a small farm, was the constant companion of his master, the young farmer, and enjoyed the daily walk to the post with his mistress, the orphan sister of Mr B—. I sometimes visited Miss B— at the farm, and on all occasions was attracted to Wanderer by the singular gentleness, sagacity, and quiet humour I noticed in his conduct. Nothing delighted the handsome creature so much as a plunge into the little duck-pond in front of the house. He would sail round and round, pretending to be utterly unconscious of the presence of forty or fifty fat ducks, who screamed and quacked wildly at his appearance among them. He meantime calmly dived under the water or darted into their very midst, feigning sometimes to be in pursuit of one particular bird, and looking at us with a waggish expression all the time. He went with his master all over the fields, and lay at his feet in his own particular sanctum, watching his movements in that sagacious way which was so completely his own. When the home at the little farm was broken up, Wanderer went with his master to a little sea-side cottage, where his canine affection no doubt soothed many a lonely hour. During his master's last brief illness Wanderer lay at his bed-side watching jealously every one who went out and in, and casting anxious eyes of affection on the poor invalid. Wanderer's eyes by the way were the most lovely in expression I ever saw, either in human being or dog—they were a dark hazel, soft lustrous and plaintive.

'After his master's death Wanderer still lay in the solitary death-chamber, like an affectionate sentinel, and those who came in to render the last offices to the deceased, did not care to turn the faithful creature out, but left him—not

liking the look in the usually gentle eyes. On the funeral day Wanderer seemed to comprehend that it really *was* necessary to allow his master to be removed, and silently rising from the side of the bed he went out to the outer door, and joined the small company of mourners. Following the hearse as closely as possible, the creature, with a look of solemn intelligence, witnessed his dead master deposited in his last resting-place, stood till the little group had dispersed, then quietly laid himself down near the grave and watched the final arrangement of the turf over it. Rising when the gravediggers had completed their work, he once more turned as if to see that all was right, and returned to the cottage. Here he partook of food, and lay down by the kitchen fire all night. Next morning, after his usual breakfast of porridge, he again took his way to the grave and lay there placidly till evening, when he once more returned home. The faithful Wanderer went through the same routine for several days, when, knowing that the dear dog would be homeless, we sent for him, determined that henceforth his home should be with us.

'Dear old fellow! I remember the day he came to us. He was soon our devoted friend and follower, going with us in all our walks, and gaining the love of all in the house by his affectionate, intelligent conduct. We had a companion for him in the shape of Spot, a white bull-terrier of extraordinary ugliness and faithfulness, and after a very few jealous tussles the two dogs became fast friends for life. In future Wanderer seemed to assume and retain a superiority over Spot, who, to do him justice, always treated his handsome friend with extraordinary attention, as the following anecdote will shew. One day both dogs went with us for a walk, and during our ramble in the neighbourhood of a wood, Spot caught a small rabbit, which he killed and carried home in his mouth, without any apparent wish to eat it. When we arrived at our own gate, great was our astonishment to see Spot march demurely forward to Wanderer, lay the rabbit at his feet and retire humbly to a little distance. The collie bit the rabbit into two portions, which gave us reason to suppose that he intended to reward his companion with a share; this however, was not to be, for somewhat to our surprise he swallowed first the one then the other with perfect coolness, Spot watching him admiringly from a little way off, and not shewing any signs of ill-will or impatience. I am sorry to say that Wanderer was *slightly* greedy in his way of eating, and generally contrived to have the lion's share of food. No one could confer a greater delight upon Wanderer than by giving him peppermint-drops or lumps of white sugar, but this was before his teeth began to fail.

'Some time ago one of the children fell ill, and was confined to bed for some time. The good Wanderer came regularly to the window of the sick-room, and received scraps from it, and even in all the frost and cold of the late severe winter he trotted about in front of the house, often lying placidly on the top of the snow, and always looking at the window with eyes of intelligence and affection.

'One day I had just been remarking to my children that Wanderer was looking uncommonly well, and seemed to have taken a new lease of

life; when to my utter amazement and consternation, my son told me to desire the cook to stop making further supplies of porridge for the collie. I asked why, whereupon he placidly informed me that "Wanderer was away!" I naturally asked "Where?" believing in a moment of aberration that the old dog had been sent off somewhere. My horror and indignation were great when I learned that the dear, wise, faithful creature had been "put out of existence," poisoned by the groom, because that functionary thought "that life was just a burden to the beast." I am not the least ashamed to say that I behaved like a child, went forth into the quiet of my own room, and wept bitterly. To think of all the love, yea, devotion, of a noble canine existence being so basely quenched all in a moment. "And he trusted the very man that administered the poison!" I thought bitterly. Well, it was "only a dog," yet I cannot tell how much I miss the kindly bark of welcome which was ever ready for me.

"I should like," said a little girl to me, when told of Wanderer's death, "to see all good, faithful animals rewarded in this world by being kept in comfort till the day of their natural death, and in a future state by being allowed to meet again their old masters and mistresses, and live happily ever after."

Some dogs, in their love and affection for their masters, have at times equalled human beings in their constancy, and even surpassed them in the marvellous intelligence with which they foresee and avert approaching danger. The following example, related to us by one of the ladies of the story, may prove interesting.

Two girls, daughters of an English country doctor, were once out for a walk together. It was an autumn afternoon, sunny and pleasant. They were accompanied by their little dog, named Jack, who was a clever little terrier, and more than once had proved his claim to be considered, as indeed he was, their protector while out walking. Their father often said he felt 'quite happy when Jack was with them; he was sure no harm could come to them.'

The two girls pursued their walk merrily. The fine afternoon tempted them to go farther than they ought however, and by the time they turned the dusk had fallen, and they were afraid they would be late for tea. One of them proposed to take a short cut through a wood with which they were well acquainted, having often gathered blackberries in it on a summer afternoon. The other agreed, and so they arrived at the edge of the wood and prepared to enter it.

'All the same I am rather afraid,' said Dora, the younger of the two; 'there have been several robberies in the neighbourhood, and I saw some very odd-looking men pass our door to-day; besides, I am wearing my new watch which papa gave me on my birth-day.'

'O nonsense!' her sister replied. 'It is nearly six o'clock now; and we shall be late. Be sure no one will wish to harm us.'

'I wish I were as certain as you are. But what's the matter with Jack?'

Just as she had said this, Jack advanced towards them, and planting himself in the middle of their path, sat down and whined.



'That is odd,' said Dora. 'I never remember him doing that before.'

The other girl derided her fears, and attempted to pass the dog; but he caught her dress in his teeth, and held her so firmly that she hardly dared to set herself free. One more effort she made, but Jack was resolute; so at last seeing how determined he was to prevent their further progress, she gave up trying.

'Well, well, you stupid little brute!' she said angrily, 'I suppose we must go all that long way round.'

So the two sisters abandoned the idea of taking the short path through the wood, and went home by the safe high-road. When they arrived, how grateful, how unutterably thankful did they feel to their little protector, whose intelligence had been so far superior to theirs, and had saved them despite themselves. A man had been found in the wood shortly after they had left it, murdered and robbed, it was conjectured by the tramps who had passed through the village in the morning. Thus Jack had preserved his mistresses from meeting perhaps a similar fate. Their gratitude it is needless to add was profound towards their little four-footed protector, who we are glad to hear lived to a good old age.

The last anecdote we shall offer is not by any means a new one, but as many of our readers may be unacquainted with it, we give it as an extraordinary and touching example of canine devotedness. A French merchant having some money due from a correspondent, set out on horseback, on purpose to receive it. His dog accompanied him; and after he had settled his affairs, his master fastened his bag of money to his saddle and rode off homewards. The dog leaped and barked around him joyfully. Having ridden some way, the merchant paused to partake of refreshments, and having dismounted, he sat under the shade of a tree and enjoyed his lunch. On remounting however, he forgot to take up the bag of money which he had laid on the grass, and rode off without it.

The dog, who perceived his forgetfulness, tried to fetch the bag; but it was too heavy for him to carry. He then ran after his master, and endeavoured to inform him of his loss by crying and howling lamentably. The merchant could not conceive what had happened to the dog, and so continued his course; but when the poor animal, despairing of attracting his attention, began to bite the horse's heels in order to try and stop it, he grew alarmed, and supposing he had gone mad, in crossing a brook he looked to see if the dog would drink. The faithful creature was however, too intent on his master's business; he bit and barked more than ever. The merchant was horrified. He was sure the dog was mad. Much as he loved and valued the creature, yet he could not allow him to live in these circumstances; so he drew a pistol from his breast and fired at his faithful servant. His aim was too sure; the poor dog fell wounded, and the merchant spurred on his horse with a heart full of sorrow. Still, he never thought of the money; he only tried to console himself by repeating: 'The dog was mad. But I had rather lost my money than my dog, all the same,' he said to himself, and stretched out his hand to grasp his treasure. It was gone.

In that instant his eyes were opened, and he knew that he had sacrificed his sagacious friend to his rashness and folly. Instantly he turned his horse, and at full gallop made his way to the place where he had lunched. He passed with half-averted eyes the scene where the tragedy was acted, and perceived the traces of blood as he proceeded. He was oppressed, distracted. But in vain he looked for his dog; he was not to be seen on the road.

At last he arrived at the spot where he had left his bag of money, and cursed himself in the madness of despair. The poor dog, unable to follow his dear but cruel master, had determined to consecrate his last moments to his service. All bloody as he was, he had crawled to the forgotten bag, and lay there watching beside it—slowly dying. When he saw his master, he tried to rise; but his strength was gone—he could only wag his tail in token of gratified recognition. The vital tide was ebbing, and the caresses of his master could not prolong his fate for even a few minutes. He tried to lick the hand that was now fondling him in the agonies of regret, as if to seal forgiveness for the deed that had deprived him of life. He then cast a look of kindness on his beloved master, and closed his eyes on him for ever.

We cannot conclude this anecdote of a noble dog without quoting these beautiful lines from the *Gleaner*:

Of all the boasted conquests Man has made  
By flood or field, the gentlest and the best  
Is in the dog, the generous dog, displayed;  
For ah! what virtues glow within his breast!

Through life the same, through sunshine and in storm;  
At once his lord's protector and his guide;  
Shapes to his wishes, to his wants conform;  
His slave, his friend, his pastime, and his pride!

## UNDER A CLOUD.

### IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

MRS CYRIL STAUNTON was a widow; her dress denoted that; and she bore upon her calm but somewhat stern countenance an expression of fixed melancholy, which involuntarily impressed people with the conviction that she had suffered more than ordinary grief. Riversdale, which was the name of the country town near which she had come to live, had a certain society and very exclusive set of its own. There were several county families, and lesser lights as well; and the advent of a new neighbour had caused not a little curiosity and speculation. She had taken a small but pretty house yclept the Cottage, on the outskirts of the town, situated in well laid out though limited grounds of its own. And as it was discovered that the late Mr Cyril Staunton had belonged to a very old Northumberland family, and that she herself was the daughter of a deceased Scottish Baronet, her antecedents were sufficiently satisfactory to admit her into the 'Upper Ten' of Riversdale society; besides which, her means, notwithstanding the unpretending way in which she lived, were evidently ample; and though she seldom relaxed from her gravity and coldness of demeanour, there was a bright element in her house which more than made up for the

chilling manner of its mistress, and that bright element was—a daughter.

This daughter, Maude, was as sweet and charming as her mother was cold and severe. They had been settled at Riversdale for little over a year; and latterly, in compliance with the wish of several of their new friends, Mrs Staunton had permitted Maude to participate in the not very brilliant festivities which the place afforded. Miss Staunton was just eighteen, and never before having been a sharer in such entertainments, never dreamt of considering them dull, or of wishing for anything beyond them. She was thoroughly satisfied, and danced away with all the joyousness of a fresh, fair, unsophisticated child. Mrs Staunton never accompanied her daughter on those occasions. Her deep mourning would, she said, be singularly inappropriate and out of place. So Maude was invariably intrusted to the chaperonage of a Mrs Herbert, who, not having daughters of her own to dispose of, rather enjoyed the responsibility of the charge of the prettiest and best-dressed girl in the room, which Miss Staunton by general consent was soon acknowledged to be; and Maude herself was not blind to the fact that admiration and attention awaited her wherever she went. She could not help knowing it. It was very pleasant to her; and the pleasure it gave shewed itself on every feature of her expressive face.

There were times however, when Miss Staunton looked sad, times when almost a shadow seemed to rest upon her brightness, dimming it for a few moments, until happier thoughts returning, chased what gloom there might have been away. People noticed that her moods were variable; and her enemies—for even sweet Maude Staunton had enemies—declared her sadness was simply assumed, because she fancied it suited her; whilst her friends accounted for the shade by surmising that some secret care oppressed her. Mrs Staunton could not be a very cheering companion for her, and but seldom were entertainments given at 'The Cottage.' Those however, who were admitted to partake of the widow's hospitality described the *ménage* as costly and unique. Her plate was of unusual massiveness; and her wine could have borne comparison with even that of Lady Harriet Montfort's celebrated cellar.

This Lady Harriet was the *grande dame* before whom all Riversdale and its surroundings bowed. She was the richest and the proudest woman imaginable; haughty and arrogant to a degree; ruling with no gentle hand those who came as she considered within the limits of her sceptre, and barely tolerating others who really were thoroughly equal by birth and position with her own imperious self. She was an impecunious Earl's only daughter, and at a mature age had married Mr Montfort, an alliance which, although brilliant as far as money went, for he was enormously rich, was considered by the Lady Harriet herself as a grievous *mésalliance*. A Duke would scarcely have been good enough for her fastidious Ladyship. However, the Earl her father, who had come to years of discretion sufficiently to realise that blue blood would not hold its own without something solid to support it, and who had held on, by dint of mortgages, friendly loans, and innumerable other petty shifts, to the skirts of

fashionable life—always needy, always at his wits' end for some new resource, decided that the Montfort thousands were not to be despised; and after some battles-royal in their shabby drawing-room with the Lady Harriet, her consent was gained, and George Montfort's daring proposal to wed her was accepted. What had possessed good honest George to wish to make such a woman his wife, no one could imagine. She did not seem to have a single quality to attract the love of such a warm heart; not a vestige of the softness and gentleness without which a woman can have no charms. But George made a virtue of these notorious shortcomings; her dark handsome face had bewitched him; his happiness depended upon his winning her. So they were married; and he paid the Earl's debts, gave him an allowance, and had made such settlements upon his bride that even she for the time being felt grateful. She was pleased too with Red Court, his splendid estate. The magnificence with which he surrounded her kept her in good-humour until she tired of having nothing to do and nothing to wish for; her ennui and weariness did not improve her naturally disagreeable temper, which not even the birth of a son and heir tended to soften. Her pet grievance was her husband's lack of ancestry; for *who were the Montforts?* Proud as their name sounded, their lineage was none of the noblest; and their wealth was owed rather to their own successful efforts than to the lawful heritage derived from a line of predecessors.

Mr Montfort died some ten years after his marriage, which had, as might have been expected, turned out far from happily. His wife's grandeur and haughty airs had been a pain and oppression to him; he had no comfort in his splendid home; no loving word or wifely action ever gladdened his heart. Nothing but his boy, his little Geoffrey, had George Montfort to care for, and upon him he lavished a depth of affection unknown almost to himself. However, death deprived the child of his father's tender love at a very early age; and Lady Harriet shortly afterwards despatched her son to school; no motherly feeling of weakness suggesting that it might have been a comfort to her to have kept him a little longer under her own eye.

Geoffrey was glad to go. Child as he was, he realised the coldness of his mother's heart. His periodical returns home were never joyous seasons to him; there was no freedom, no legitimate enjoyment countenanced at Red Court; in fact it was always a glad day when the time for his departure came. Except for stolen expeditions with the gamekeepers, and exploits on horseback undreamt of by his dignified lady-mother, who prided herself upon upholding the dignity of her son—the grandson of the Earl—the boy's holidays would have been seasons of intolerable dreariness to him.

Geoffrey's school and college days were now over; he had been of age for three years, and was now in full possession of his property—Red Court and five-and-twenty thousand a year; less a jointure of five thousand yearly to the Lady Harriet, who continued as usual at the head of the establishment, where she would remain until Geoffrey married. His future settlement had occupied

much of Lady Harriet's thoughts. His wife was to be of her choosing; that she had determined, and also made up her mind not to be satisfied with any ordinary mortal. Geoffrey's duty was to raise the Montfort name. He should marry, and marry well too. The bitter drop in her cup of having married beneath her should not be in his. Nothing under a Duke's daughter should satisfy the maternal ambitions of her heart.

Geoffrey was fully aware of his mother's desires and views for him. He calmly allowed her to have her own way, as far as laying plans went, inwardly determining however, that when he did marry, if he ever married at all, it should be for love not for lineage. Had George Montfort lived, he would have been proud of his broad-shouldered, handsome son, who was so like himself in everything that was honourable and straightforward. There was nothing wonderful about him; but he was a boy, or a man rather, of whom a parent might well be proud; such a thorough gentleman in every sense of the word, with an Englishman's horror of anything approaching to humbug or deceit; a being as different from his disagreeable mother as it was possible to conceive. One could scarcely fancy him a bitter enemy; but one could easily imagine him a firm friend. His temper was quick, without a shade of sullenness; and in point of generosity he excelled almost to a fault. To hear of a trouble or to be told of a strait, with Geoffrey Montfort was to relieve it forthwith.

The Duke's daughter had been duly selected by Lady Harriet—the Lady Margaret Theophila Fitz-Howard—not very young, nor very lovely, nor very fascinating either, but still a Duke's daughter; and as she was coming with her mother Her Grace the Duchess to pay a visit to Red Court, their visit was to be celebrated by a grand ball, to which all the people in the neighbourhood were to be invited. Perhaps it was owing to the fact of Mrs Staunton's good connections, perhaps to a whim for which no one could account, but Lady Harriet had some time previous to the announcement of her ball called at the Cottage. So in due time an invitation arrived for the ball, to which as usual it was arranged that Mrs Herbert should chaperone Maude. Everybody was going to it. It was to be on a scale of extraordinary grandeur; and for a week or two preceding it, the local dressmakers who were considered reliable enough to be trusted with the costume, had but a poor time of it as regarded rest and quietness. They were kept working early and late cutting out and contriving all manner of elegances for this wondrous ball. Basket after basket went forth charged with costly contents, bloomy velvets, shimmering silks and satins, delicate tulles, and fragile tulletranes, over which the intended wearers hung with rapture, or perhaps the reverse when carefully drawn forth for inspection. The solitary hairdresser Riversdale possessed had more engagements for the eventful night than he could possibly fulfil; in fact every one seemed to have some share in the general excitement which the forthcoming ball had called forth.

What would Maude Staunton wear? That was queried in more than one dressing-room coterie. She was sure to have something ridiculously grand; so said Miss Beatrice Browning, a tall, dark, handsome girl, who regarded Maude with feelings of unmixed aversion. Before her advent, Miss Brown-

ing had imagined herself the reigning beauty; and her appearance was therefore looked upon as an unwarrantable intrusion upon her established rights. Who was Miss Staunton? What was she to come to Riversdale and interfere with other people's positions? In the privacy of her own home, Miss Browning did not spare Miss Staunton; but in public, as yet she only stabbed her by very innocent and quietly uttered innuendos, 'damning with faint praise' in any remarks she made upon one whom she chose to consider in the light of a rival and trespasser upon her own particular territory. Miss Browning had determined to make an impression at the Red Court ball; and feeling certain Miss Staunton would appear in some magnificent attire, resolved to anticipate her own not too ample allowance, and to invest in a dress sufficiently splendid to eclipse and extinguish anything the latter could have thought of. The night had arrived and with it her dress. White satin—what could be handsomer?—blonde lace, crimson roses, gold leaves, pearl ornaments. Surely nothing could surpass such a combination! Her dark hair was elaborated into a wonderful edifice; and her face was lighted up with a smile of unutterable contentment when at last she surveyed herself, dressed for conquest, prior to entering the ball-room, where though dancing had not as yet commenced, already more than half the company were assembled.

The band struck up their preliminary chords just as Miss Browning marched in under the wing of her inoffensive little mother, a meek-eyed matron, attired in the regulation black velvet and white lace shawl adopted by so many British dowagers.

Mr Montfort was leading out the Lady Margaret Theophila Fitz-Howard to open the ball; and there just opposite to him, with her arm resting upon that of a gentleman unknown to Miss Browning, stood Maude Staunton, waiting to take her place in the first quadrille. She was dressed in a simple white tulle, devoid of all colour or ornament; it was exquisitely made in a series of cloudy skirts. In her hand she carried a splendid bouquet of white camellias and narcissus; and a bud of the former resting against its dark shining green leaves nestled amid the massive coils of her fair hair. There was nothing magnificent about her except a glittering diamond star, which she wore suspended from a broad black velvet band round her neck; but there was something so fresh, so fair, so simple, yet withal so striking about her, that the charming *ensemble* caused Miss Browning's colour to fade into as great a pallor as if she had seen an apparition. The sweetness of Maude's appearance was still further enhanced by the expression of her face, which at the beginning of the evening chanced to be more than usually sad. She was the belle of the room—grudgingly as some acknowledged it, there was not a doubt of the fact; and no one there more ardently admired her than the host himself, who had never before met her under similar circumstances.

Wise men have acknowledged that it requires neither time nor space to fall in love—that the tender passion may be kindled by a very passing glimpse—our fate sealed for good or for evil by a very brief half-hour. So it was with Geoffrey Montfort and Maude Staunton. The glamour

came over them; and that evening was one scene of pleasure and triumph to the widow's only daughter; for even the Lady Margaret Theophila stood sadly neglected, whilst Geoffrey, careless of his mother's fierce regards, again and again selected as his partner the fair Maude Staunton. Mrs Herbert was rejoiced at her charge's conquest. Out of all the numbers who had assembled in those brilliant rooms she alone felt proud and pleased. The general feeling was certainly not friendly. But what cared Geoffrey? what cared Maude? They were both young, both impulsive; the present was all to them; and when at length the gay scene ended, and under his escort she was placed by Mrs Herbert's side, carefully wrapped up, and the door of the carriage was closed, she leant back flushed and radiant, exclaiming: 'O Mrs Herbert, this has been the happiest evening I ever spent! I never enjoyed anything so much in my life!'

Whilst Geoffrey returned to the ball-room to bid adieu to his less appreciative guests, and to ignore the sullen lowering looks of her Ladyship, who would have been more violent in her disapproval had she guessed that her wishes were to have no weight as regarded the Lady Margaret; for he had determined if ever he married at all, his wife should be Maude Staunton; and he meant it.

#### CONVERSATION.

It is frequently remarked that the art of conversation is lost; that everything is printed nowadays and nothing said; that such good talkers and good listeners as Dr Johnson and his friends are extinct creatures. We do not think that these laments are justified. It is of course true that the printing-press has in a measure superseded the tongue, but not altogether; for the living voice of man has a power of charming and influencing that can never be exercised by dead letters. It is true we do not now make a business of conversation and stake our reputation on a *mot*, as did Dr Johnson's contemporaries; but perhaps this fact increases rather than diminishes the charm of modern talk. It is more simple and natural, less dogmatic and egotistical. In our pleasant chats at afternoon teas and tennis-parties we can well dispense with stilted lectures of the 'Sir, said Dr Johnson' type. But though we are by no means destitute of conversational powers, there are certain rules as regards talking which are too often neglected in our social intercourse.

The first rule we must observe is to avoid personalities. But this is by no means an easy thing to do; for the love of personalities is almost universal—a love seen in the child who asks you to tell him a story, meaning thereby somebody's adventure; a love testified by the interest adults take in reading biographies; a love gratified by police reports, court news, divorce cases, accounts of accidents, and lists of births, marriages, and deaths; a love displayed even by conversations in the street, where fragments of dialogue heard in passing shew that mostly between men, and always between women, the personal pronouns

recur every instant. Having this lively interest in our neighbours' affairs, we can with difficulty avoid gossiping about them. But the habit is nevertheless dangerous. It creates enemies, and separates friends. We meet an acquaintance in the street from whom we parted but yesterday on the most friendly terms. We wonder why we are passed by with an infinitesimally small nod of acknowledgment, or perhaps with no recognition at all. If we deem it worth while to investigate the cause of this coldness, we shall generally discover that some one has been biassing the mind of our friend against us. A few rash words will set a family, a neighbourhood, a nation by the ears; they have often done so. Half the lawsuits and half the wars have been brought about by talking about people instead of about things. 'Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth.'

This sort of personal talk is not only wrong but stupid. It is generally indulged in by persons devoid of brains, education, and culture. People who read and think, prefer to talk of ideas and things. They live in a high intellectual atmosphere, where chit-chat about their neighbours' incomes, quarrels, dress, and servants—the little wearisome jealousies of Mr or Mrs A—in reference to Mr or Mrs B—does not enter.

The temptation to sin against good-nature and good taste in conversation for the sake of raising a laugh and gaining admiration, is a very strong one in the case of those who have been gifted with wit and humour. But it is the abuse of these noble gifts rather than their use that leads astray. On this point we may quote the following words: 'When wit,' says Sydney Smith, 'is combined with sense and information; when it is softened by benevolence and restrained by principle; when it is in the hands of a man who can use it and despise it; who can be witty, and something more than witty; who loves honour, justice, decency, good-nature, morality, and religion ten thousand times better than wit—wit is then a beautiful and delightful part of our nature.'

If we would be agreeable and improving companions, we must be good listeners as well as good talkers, and carefully observe certain occasions of silence. 'The occasions of silence,' says Bishop Butler, 'are obvious—namely, when a man has nothing to say, or nothing but what is better unsaid; better either in regard to some particular persons he is present with, or from its being an interruption to conversation of a more agreeable kind; or better, lastly, with regard to himself.'

Nowhere is there room for the display of good manners so much as in conversation. It is a part of good manners not to talk too much. Remembering that the first syllable of the word conversation is *con* (with), that it means talking *with* another, we should abstain from lecturing, and be as ready to listen as to talk. Our anecdote or sharp reply will keep, or need not find utterance at all; so we are not under the necessity of interrupting our companion, and voting him by our looks a bore, or at least an interruption to our own much better remarks. But besides the rule, that we should not be impatient to get in our word, that a few brilliant flashes of *silence* should occur in our



conversation, another rule is, not to take for our theme—ourselves. We must remember that, as a rule, we and our concerns can be of no more importance to other men than they and their concerns are to us.

Every one will understand from painful experience what is meant by a bore, though it is not very easy to describe the creature. A bore is a heavy, pompous, meddling person who harps on one string, occupies an undue share of conversation, and says things in ten words which required only two; all the time being evidently convinced that he is making a great impression. 'It is easy,' says Sydney Smith, 'to talk of carnivorous animals and beasts of prey; but does such a man, who lays waste a whole party of civilised beings by prosing, reflect upon the joys he spoils, and the misery he creates in the course of his life? and that any one who listens to him through politeness, would prefer toothache or earache to his conversation? Does he consider the extreme uneasiness which ensues when the company have discovered a man to be an extremely absurd person, at the same time that it is absolutely impossible to convey to the terrible being, by words or manner, the most distant suspicion of the discovery? And then, who punishes this bore? What sessions and what assizes for him? When the judges have gone their vernal and autumnal rounds, the sheep-stealer disappears, the swindler has been committed to penal servitude. But after twenty years of crime, the bore is discovered in the same house, in the same attitude, eating the same soup, still untried, unpunished.'

In all ages, women's conversation has been made a subject for ridicule. They are said to talk too much, to have venomous spiteful tongues, to be addicted to nagging, to disdain argumentation and even sense in their talk. For ourselves we believe that the sins of the tongue are committed about equally by both sexes. Of course women have more talking to do than men have, for social intercourse is mainly indebted to them for its existence. And their desire to please in society may sometimes tempt women to talk too much; if indeed there can be too much of conversation so sympathetic, humorous, and full of nice distinctions as is that of women whom all agree to call 'charming.' Let not the Cynic, who, if he has himself never said a foolish thing, has perhaps never done a wise one, quote in reference to the conversation of such women, Pope's lines:

Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,

Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

What are and what are not 'women's rights,' is a point much disputed; but that it is their duty to cultivate the art of conversation, none will question. But as the hearts of women are kind and sympathetic, so have they no excuse for crushing little sensibilities, violating little proprieties, and overlooking little discriminations; in a word, for committing those faults which make the conversation of ill-natured people so dispiriting and painful.

The aim of every talker should be never to be long and never to be wrong. And the only way we can approximate to this perfection of sociableness is to cultivate both our heads and

hearts. The conversation of really cultured people is never vulgar and never empty; more than this, it is free from envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness.

### 'HOVELLING.'

THE pleasant old town of Deal is situated on the east coast of Kent, nearly opposite the centre of the famous Goodwin Sands, which from time immemorial have been the terror of the mariner. The very name rings on the ear like a sort of knell, which seems to carry with it a painful association of shipwreck and death.

Everything, however, is done by that genuine sailors' friend the 'Trinity House,' that ample funds, modern science, and careful forethought can do, as is evidenced by accurate charts of the locality, and by buoying and lighting these dreaded quicksands for the whole ten miles of their reach, in order to warn mariners of their danger. But notwithstanding all these precautions, shipwrecks only too frequently occur on the Goodwins, especially to foreign vessels unused to the peculiarities of these waters, and ignorant of the fact that the services of a pilot are absolutely necessary when passing these dangerous shoals. Nor is it too much to say—indeed it is very well known—that many more lives would be annually sacrificed and ships and property lost, but for that watchful care, skill, and daring, so constantly and unflinchingly exhibited by boatmen belonging to Deal and its immediate neighbours Walmer and Kingsdown. It is to these men and to their peculiar calling that the terms 'hovellers' and 'hovelling' (the derivation of which we shall afterwards explain) are commonly applied. Deal claims the largest share in point of numbers of these brave fellows, as being by far the largest of the three places named.

During the bright days of summer, or whilst fine weather and soft airs continue, a stranger visiting Deal, and unacquainted with the real attributes of these men, would set down the hovellers as a lazy idle set of fellows, who appear to do nothing the livelong day but 'loaf' about the beach, lounging on the capstans, lolling on the boat-stages, or 'shoring up' against the nearest wall, or any projection that will serve as a convenient leaning-post. Dressed in the usual heavy blue clothing, cut sailor-fashion large and easy, and shining hat, which they never seem to change winter or summer, there they sit or loll, hands invariably in pockets, short clay in mouth, smoking, chatting, and joking. Such are the Deal hovellers. That these men are idle for the time being is, doubtless, true enough; but this enforced temporary idleness only serves to bring into greater contrast their daring when afloat. Let a tempestuous hurricane arise, when the sea is lashed into rage and fury; when the waves are running 'mountains high,' and the fearful breakers are plainly visible all along the fatal 'Sands,' when landsmen gladly seek the welcome shelter of solid bricks and mortar; when no one remains a moment out of doors, or cares to buffet the fury of the storm any longer than he can possibly help; when the black and angry sky contrasts

strangely with the white and foaming sea—then is the hoveller's opportunity.

Without the smallest hesitation, and fearing neither winds nor waves, dressed in his canvas waterproofs, his 'sou-wester' hat tied under his chin, the boatman and his companions assemble on the beach; one of the splendidly built Deal boats is quickly manned by brave and ready hands, and launched through the boiling surf, often at the risk of being swamped, or stove in, at the very outset—a casualty that nothing but the consummate tact and skill exhibited by these men alone prevents—and quickly hoisting their close-reefed lugsail, whilst sea and spray fly high over the boat, away they go for the 'Sands;' certainly the very last place on earth where any one would willingly find himself during a tempest of wind and rain. But the hovellers dare this extreme danger on the bare chance of falling in with any vessel requiring a pilot, or information, or help of any kind; and it has often happened that a boat's crew of these brave fellows have been out battling with winds and waves for forty-eight hours or more at a stretch, wholly exposed to the severities of the weather—for these boats are not decked—without the smallest return for their courage and labour; for it is labour of the severest kind, to which extreme peril is frequently added. But, on the other hand, it is very well known that many a noble ship and many a valuable life have owed their preservation, from the destructive Goodwins, entirely to the fearless daring of these Deal hovellers.

Many indeed are the touching, but no less truthful tales that are frequently told of some unfortunate ship which had run on these Sands. And the crew, finding their distress signals apparently unheeded, and that every earthly hope of succour had seemingly fled, had calmly resigned themselves to the dreadful, and apparently certain, fate awaiting them; when suddenly, through the deepening gloom, the driving mist, or the blinding snow, there has hove in sight the saving angel in the form of a Deal lugger, manned by eight or ten resolute hearts and strong arms; and a stentorian voice, heard above even the roar of the elements, has hailed them, and bidden them 'hold on,' as help was nigh!

In these praiseworthy efforts to approach an imperilled ship and rescue her crew, the real work of the gallant hovellers may be said to be only beginning; for the great difficulty now to be surmounted is to get sufficiently close to the ship to receive her crew on board the lugger and yet to avoid a violent collision between boat and ship—a circumstance very likely to happen from the extreme violence and agitation of the sea. Should the boat but once hit the ship full end on, even if she escaped the consequences of such a blow, the next wave would probably wash her on to or over it, to the certain destruction of all hands. The mode of procedure is as follows. When the danger is very great and the sea very high, the sail of the boat is lowered and the anchor dropped considerably to windward of the labouring ship. With consummate judgment and caution, only gained by long experience, the cable is then 'paid out' yard by yard, and the heavy rolling sea is allowed to carry the boat, little by little, towards the vessel, till she is almost alongside. And now not a second is to be lost, and those of the ship's

crew who are able to do so instantly leap into the boat; for if another wave catches her in this position she must be dashed to pieces. Then indeed is a moment of intense anxiety and peril, and all hands haul upon the cable with might and main for dear life until the boat gradually draws away from the wreck. If, however, all are not rescued in the first attempt, the same perilous manœuvre has to be played perhaps several times in succession. Coolly and cautiously the hovellers handle their boat; the cable is again veered out, and again she runs alongside the wreck, until at length the dangerous game is rewarded, and all the crew have been at last got on board. Then all hands again haul on the cable, and the boat, with the rescued crew, ultimately drifts clear of the wreck.

But, as the risk and danger are still most imminent, not a moment must be wasted; the boat's cable is therefore instantly cut with a blow of a hatchet (without which useful tool no hoveller's boat ever goes to sea), and the sail is quickly run up. But although the sufferers are all now safe in the boat, do not suppose that the work is done, or that the danger is yet by any means over; for before the boat can reach the friendly shore, a great and perilous gulf has to be passed, consisting of the terrible breakers of the Sands and the raging waves beyond; so that another fierce and desperate struggle with winds and ocean for seven or eight long and weary miles has to be encountered before the rescued crew and their gallant preservers are landed on Deal beach. Even here, on the very threshold of home, the danger still continues; for the utmost skill and caution must be observed in order to effect a landing, as accidents have occasionally happened from the unskilful beaching of a crowded boat. It will thus be seen that from launching to beaching, from first to last during the whole of this severe elemental battle, lasting probably many hours, these men may be said to carry their lives in their hands; and yet it is both a common and a true saying, that however bad a hoveller may be in all other matters, he will never hesitate a single moment to attempt a rescue when life is in danger, however fearful and unequal the odds may be against him.

Desperate and perilous as the life-boat service is, it is not, after all, so much so as this, for the simple reason that in the one case the boat is expressly built and arranged with every appliance that art, science, and practical experience can suggest, for the work to be undertaken; whereas the boat of the hoveller is the ordinary beach boat, nothing more, and of course destitute of air-boxes or any other contrivance to keep her afloat in case of swamping; but in all other respects as finely built a craft and as admirably fitted for her work as any in the kingdom.

Such then is the modern 'hoveller,' and such is the usual occupation understood by 'hovelling.' When not engaged in the active work of his calling, the hoveller may be frequently seen cruising about the neighbourhood of the Sands, or taking pilots or friends to, or bringing them from, outward-bound ships in the Downs. His services are also secured in taking out anchors and cables to ships in want of such articles; or fishing up and recovering—where possible—anchors and cables which have been abandoned and buoyed; or recovering what he can of ship-

wrecked cargoes, for all of which he claims salvage. He is also serviceable in carrying urgent orders or letters to the outward-bound, and many such other occupations, with perhaps a little fishing, or a little 'pleasuring' with visitors in the summer, which, though undoubtedly irregular and fluctuating enough, pays perhaps in the end fairly well; and if the man abstains from the curse of intemperance, and is careful and prudent, as many to their credit are in an eminent degree, a comfortable little home is generally the result. The wife also often helps to bring 'grist to the mill' by working on her own account in a variety of ways, or in keeping a shop, or in letting apartments.

Like all other inhabitants of the coasts opposite or near to France, the hoveller of half a century ago was, as a matter of course, an inveterate smuggler. The trade was then carried on by him with uncommon gusto and address; and it has been said—we know not how truthfully—that more than one fortune has been made, especially during the long war, out of brandy, wine, silk, and lace, the products of 'Fair France,' which had never been subjected to the scrutiny of a British Customs officer. But if the hoveller was in his day an inveterate smuggler, he was not a whit worse than his neighbours in the adjoining counties. The practice seems indeed inherent in all coast-born men when there happens to be the opportunity; and it has always been found one of the most difficult of tasks to make these men comprehend that although they may have fairly bought and paid for goods, the product of a foreign country, they are breaking the laws in trying to evade import duty.

The origin of the term 'hoveller,' as applied to a boatman on these coasts, is somewhat uncertain. It would appear from an ancient record of the period, that King Edward III. appointed certain gentlemen who were to undertake to patrol and guard the coasts of Kent, at that time the great highway into England, especially from France. These gentlemen were each to furnish, from the county lying on or near the coast, a stated number of men-at-arms and 'hobilers,' to form a regular day-watch as well as a night-watch, so that the patrolling of the coast would be thus constantly kept up. This is in all probability the first mention of anything like the establishment of a 'coastguard,' although their object was, of course, not to catch smugglers, but to give timely warning of the approach of a real enemy to our shores. The term 'hobiler' is supposed to be derived from the French word *hobil*, a light quilted surcoat, which was very likely worn by these men over their defensive armour; but other explanations have been given.

Although their services are now no longer needed to guard our coasts, or to resist the invader, still the present race of hovellers are ever ready to rival their forefathers in patient and enduring courage, and in doing battle, not indeed with an enemy of flesh and blood, where life is to be cruelly sacrificed, but with something far more sublimely terrible, where life is to be nobly saved from the ruthless angry sea.

[We would take this opportunity of again urging the necessity of using oil as an aid in rescuing human life. The avocation of the hoveller is just the one in which oil would be invaluable.

He bravely goes forth to the struggling ship, and as has been described, he carries his boat to windward, and with anchor down, he pays out cable till his craft has all but touched the ship. Here surely might be a fitting opportunity for testing the virtues of oil in subduing broken seas; for, as has been now repeatedly urged in these columns, oil or fatty matter when thrown on a wave-tossed sea, converts broken water into smoothly rolling water, and thus prevents what would otherwise be white-crested waves from breaking over the boat or ship. Oil too, as we have also shewn, has the peculiarity of calming the sea to *windward*, as well as to *leeward*, of the spot into which it has been cast, a phenomenon which materially enhances its saving virtues. Again we commend the subject to all who are interested in the welfare of our marine community.—Ed.]

#### LESSONS IN COOKERY FOR CHILDREN.

MANUAL dexterity in any art is more readily acquired in youth than in after-life. The trick of handling and skilful manipulation, upon which in a great measure the success of cookery depends, does not come easily to those who have not been accustomed to use their hands from childhood. The science of cookery is better appreciated by older minds; but the practical part should be taught as early as possible. A lady who had formerly some experience of School-board teaching, informs us that the children were required at each demonstration lesson to give up the notes of their last lesson to be corrected. They were catechised continuously, and tasted the dishes cooked. After a time, six or eight of the brightest children were allowed to come down and cook in the second half of the lesson what they had seen the teacher do in the first. The notes of the pupil-teachers were most perfect; but the work of the little girls was the best, a fact which would seem to illustrate our theory. We do not purpose to speak further of the work of the School-board, which has now no connection with South Kensington.

In a former paper on Demonstrations in Cookery we mentioned that a special programme consisting of twenty lessons had been made for the use of schools. The notes of this course of lessons, with the recipes used, are to be found in *The Scholar's Handbook of Household Management and Cookery*, by W. B. Tegetmeier (Macmillan & Co.). These lessons are used for outside demonstrations generally, and are carried out at the School for Cookery at South Kensington in children's practice-classes. Classes for children are not established permanently at that School; but for some time past the Cooks' Company have sent girls there from their ward schools to have practical lessons in plain cookery. The children from Holy Trinity School, West Brompton, have also been sent there by the clergy for the same course of instruction.

In her Report for the year ending 31st March 1878, the Lady Superintendent says: 'With a view to making the instruction as practically useful as possible to the children, we have fitted up

one kitchen with the most ordinary utensils such as every poor woman would be likely to possess. We take twelve children in each class. In this "children's kitchen" there are six stoves, two children at work at each stove. Four of these stoves are small and portable, requiring no fixing; they can be used either open or shut, have a nice oven, and make an excellent ironing stove. They cost about thirty shillings; and it is much to be desired that the people could be induced to take to these stoves in preference to the miserable little grates generally found in their homes. If the clergy would organise stove-clubs as well as coal-clubs, this reformation could, I think, soon be effected. These stoves are not extravagant, and will burn anything in the shape of fuel. They are known in the trade as the Princess, and are manufactured by Smith and Wellstood, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C. At present our children's practice-classes are composed only of girls. I hope in time the same opportunity will be given to boys for acquiring instruction, which in many of the vocations of manhood would prove of great service to them. We have had boys at our local demonstration classes, and found them even more apt pupils than the girls, though our branch of instruction is one to which our small pupils as a rule take very kindly.

These practice-classes at the School for Cookery are held twice a week. The children cook for two hours; and a third hour is given to clearing up the kitchen, laying the cloth for dinner, and waiting at table. The work is so arranged that every separate branch, both of the cookery and other operations, is taught to each child by turns. The children dine at the School before leaving, and thus have an opportunity of tasting the dishes they have prepared. They set about their work with a right good will; and two of the most qualified staff-teachers are specially devoted to their instruction.

Demonstrations to children are usually given in turn with other work by teachers who are sent out from the School. Occasionally after a course of demonstrations, practice-classes are held, in which the children cook what they have seen done. Of course no amount of demonstration is of value unless it invariably lead up to actual practice in the art of cookery: children must practise for themselves everything they have been taught. At the same time it is essential that the theory be learned before the practice is attempted, as by that means children will cook more intelligently. They should first have information regarding the various processes and the ingredients used, which cannot well be conveyed to them while they are at work; but like working out a sum in arithmetic which has been set by a teacher, the children should invariably be allowed, if at all practicable, to work out the cookery-lecture with their own hands.

An excellent teacher of our acquaintance, before conducting a practice-class, gathers the children around her and gives them a short lecture. For instance, if the subject of the day be Pastry, she makes her pupils clearly understand the difference between short crust and flaky crust, tells them the kind of fat that may be used, and the proportion which that should bear to the flour in order to make rich crust, plain crust, or crust of medium

richness. It would be well if every teacher were to follow some such plan. Demonstration lessons prepare the ground of the mind for the seed of knowledge we wish to sow. A good cook must pay constant attention to details, and powers of observation and foresight have to be developed in her.

It has been said that 'teaching of the hands is not a thing separate and far apart from the teaching of the head. The education of common things cannot be rightly imparted or received without the exercise of thought and intellect. To be taught to think is the basis of all education. To ask and to be answered, and to be able to tell again the how and the wherefore of the daily material of the daily work of the hands, is a direct and successful exertion of observation and mental power.' Children should always take notes of a demonstration lesson, and questions should be given them to answer next time. The language employed must be simple. There is no cleverness displayed in talking over the heads of one's audience; but adaptability is the highest art. We believe that if the plan of teaching cookery to children is more generally adopted, the next generation will hear far less of that domestic grievance—the scarcity of good cooks.

#### THE USES OF FERNS.

In the *Fern World*, we are told by the author, Mr F. G. Heath, 'that many species of these beautiful plants are used not only for food and medicine, but for economic purposes. As food, they are chiefly useful to the aboriginal inhabitants of some foreign countries. In the larger of the exotic ferns, the tree-like species, the inner part of the stem, stipes or rhizoma—corresponding to what would be the pith in other plants—and sometimes the whole of the tuberous rhizoma, is eaten generally after being boiled. In India, some of the natives boil the tops of one species of fern, and eat them with shrimp-curry. Amongst ourselves, two of the most beautiful species—the Bracken and the Male Fern—are said to have been sometimes used as ingredients in the manufacture of beer; whilst one foreign species (*Aspidium fragrans*) is actually stated to have been used for making tea. Our native Maidenhair used at one time to furnish a principal ingredient for a sirup called *capillaire*. . . . The root-stock of the Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*) was in times gone by, reputed to possess the quality of healing wounds, whether applied to them externally, or taken inwardly in the form of a decoction. Its outward application was considered a specific against bruises or sprains, and good for bones broken or out of joint; and taken inwardly, it was also believed to be good for cholera and for splenic disorders. In some parts of Europe its root-stock is said to be used, after being boiled in water, for the purpose of starching linen. . . . A pleasant and familiar inhabitant of our lanes and woods, the Common Polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*), has had ascribed to it by ancient herbalists, various medicinal qualities, amongst them being the power of curing coughs and asthmatic affections, the dried rhizomas being powdered for the purpose and mixed with honey.'

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